

In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows, where underlines stand for additions and strikethroughs stand for deletions.

1. (currently amended) Support system for an apparatus of the type suitable to treat substrates and/or wafers, comprising:

- a fixed base element having a substantially flat surface in which a substantially cylindrical seat with a substantially flat bottom is formed, and
- a movable support element having a substantially disc-shaped form, being housed inside the seat, being able to rotate about the axis of the seat and having a substantially flat upper side provided with at least one cavity for a substrate or wafer and a substantially flat bottom side;

~~characterized in that~~ wherein it comprises one or more passages for one or more gas flows, in which said passages emerge inside the seat in directions which are inclined and preferably skew with respect to said axis, in such a way as to lift and rotate the support element.

2. (original) System according to Claim 1, wherein the support element is designed to remain substantially inside the seat, preferably with its upper side substantially aligned with the surface of the base element both when it is stationary and when it is in movement.

3. (currently amended) System according to Claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein an annular channel for collecting the gas emitted from the passages, is formed in the seat.

4. (currently amended) System according to Claim 1 ~~or 2 or 3~~, wherein the passages are branches of the same pipe (14).

5. (currently amended) System according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~ Claim 1, wherein the passages are only two and are arranged in symmetrical positions with respect to said axis.

6. (currently amended) System according to ~~anyone of the preceding claims~~ Claim 1, wherein a pin and a corresponding hole are provided for guiding the rotation of the support element.

7. (original) System according to Claim 6, wherein a cylindrical protuberance with a cylindrical hole is provided in the centre of the seat of the base element (10), in which a cylindrical recess with a cylindrical pin is provided in the

centre of the bottom side of the support element and in which the pin of the support element is inserted in the hole of the base element and the protuberance of the base element is inserted in the recess of the support element.

8. (currently amended) System according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~ Claim 1, wherein the bottom side of the support element is provided with depressed areas shaped so that the gas flows emerging from the passages exert a thrust thereon, said areas being preferably all identical and arranged symmetrically with respect to said axis.

9. (original) System according to Claim 8, wherein said areas are bounded by three or four sides.

10. (original) System according to Claim 9, wherein said areas have at least one straight side.

11. (currently amended) System according to Claim 9 ~~or 10~~, wherein said areas have at least one curved side.

12. (currently amended) System according to Claim 9 ~~or 10 or 11~~, wherein said areas have a variable depth.

13. (original) System according to Claim 12, wherein the depth of said areas diminishes or increases in the radial direction with respect to the axis of rotation.

14. (currently amended) System according to Claim 12 ~~or 13~~, wherein the depth of said areas diminishes or increases in the tangential direction with respect to the axis of rotation.

15. (currently amended) System according to ~~Claims 8 to 14~~ Claim 8, wherein said areas reach the edge of the bottom side of the support element.

16. (original) System according to Claim 15, wherein one side of said areas coincides with a section of the edge of the bottom side of the support element.

17. (currently amended) System according to one of ~~Claims 8 to 16~~ Claim 8, wherein said areas have an edge, said edge being positioned and shaped in such a way that the gas flows emerging from the passages exert a thrust on said edge.

18. (currently amended) System according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~ Claim 1, wherein the support element is able to act also as a susceptor.

19. (currently amended) System according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~ Claim 1, characterized in that it is suitable for loading/unloading of the support element into/from the base element.

20. (currently amended) Reactor for epitaxial growth of semiconductor materials on substrates, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein it comprises a support system for substrates according to ~~anyone of Claims 1 to 19~~ Claim 1.

21. (currently amended) Apparatus for high-temperature thermal treatment of wafers, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein it comprises a support system for wafers according to ~~anyone of Claims 1 to 19~~ Claim 1.

22. (currently amended) Support element for an apparatus of the type designed to treat substrates and/wafers, having a substantially disc-shaped form with a substantially flat upper side provided with at least one cavity for a substrate or wafer and with a substantially flat bottom side, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the bottom side is provided with depressed areas shaped to receive the thrust of gas flows.

23. (original) Element according to Claim 22, wherein said areas are bounded by three or four sides.

24. (original) Element according to Claim 23, wherein said areas have at least one straight side.

25. (currently amended) Element according to Claim 22 ~~or 23~~, wherein said areas have at least one curved side.

26. (currently amended) Element according to Claim 22 ~~or 23 or 24~~, wherein said areas have a variable depth.

27. (original) Element according to Claim 26, wherein the depth of said areas (22) diminishes or increases in the radial direction with respect to its axis.

28. (currently amended) Element according to ~~Claim 27 or 28~~ Claim 26, wherein the depth of said areas (22) diminishes or increases in the tangential direction with respect to its axis.

29. (currently amended) Element according to ~~Claims 22 to 28~~ Claim 22, wherein said areas reach the edge of its bottom side.

30. (original) Element according to Claim 29, wherein one side of said areas coincides with a section of the edge of its bottom side.

31. (currently amended) Element according to ~~one of Claims 22 to 30~~
Claim 22, wherein said areas have an edge, said edge being positioned and shaped
to receive the thrust of gas flows.

32. (currently amended) Element according to ~~one of Claims 22 to 31~~
Claim 22, characterized in that it is able to act also as a susceptor.